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Some Recent Statements

and other Matter

CONCERNING

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

BY

*Jane*  
MISS RUSSELL, of Ashiesteel.

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FOLDING CHAIR, GIVEN BY SIR WALTER SCOTT TO HIS COUSIN, MISS JANE RUSSELL, DURING A LONG ILLNESS, AND PROCURED BY HIM FROM LONDON AT A COST OF FORTY-SEVEN POUNDS. IT WAS SENT TO ABBOTSFORD DURING HIS LAST ILLNESS.



*Some recent Statements and other Matter concerning  
Sir Walter Scott.*

By MISS RUSSELL of Ashiesteel.

THE large leather wheel-chair, now at Ashiesteel, is undoubtedly an interesting relic of Sir Walter Scott, as having been a costly present from him to a relation who had been sorely stricken; but it is rather difficult to account for the statement which reappears, from time to time, that it had been used by himself. Anyone who has examined the chair, must see that the large wheel-guards would prevent it ever being brought up to a table for writing or any other purpose; while Lockhart's statement that the chair in which he and Laidlaw wheeled Sir Walter about, during the remarkable revival of a few days which followed his last return to Abbotsford, was a bath-chair borrowed from Huntley Burn (the Fergusons') may certainly be taken as trustworthy. (See *Life*, vol. 7th, chap. 11.)

The large leather chair was by this time at Ashiesteel, having been no doubt warehoused in Edinburgh with the Ashiesteel furniture, when the house was empty; and it was undoubtedly sent to Abbotsford, at the time in question, for Sir Walter's use.

But even if it had been at all suited for an invalid, it may be a question whether it was at Abbotsford during the time when he was able to be moved about. It is certain that, on the last day he left his room, when he insisted on being wheeled up to his desk, and making an attempt to write, it was not in this chair; for, as said before, it could not have been brought up to the table.

And as he had been lying in what seemed a half-dead state in London, it is not likely that anyone could have anticipated his having any use for a wheel-chair. No doubt it was dispatched, as soon as possible, on its being known that he seemed wonderfully better, and was being wheeled about out of doors. Distinct consciousness seemed to return on his recognising the road between Edinburgh and Gala-shiels. This was on Wednesday, 12th August 1832, and it lasted for about a week, the attempt to write being on Tuesday; and he never left his room again. For about a

week more he sat up for some time in the middle of the day, and then took to his bed entirely. Even at this time it is unlikely the leather chair was used; the arms and guards would make it extremely difficult to get a heavy, helpless invalid into it.

The journey to Italy, on the whole, seems to have done him more harm than good; and after he heard, at Naples (where his son Charles had a diplomatic appointment) of the death of Goethe, whom he had meant to visit on his way home, he thought of nothing but to get back to Abbotsford. The great German genius was old enough to have been his father, but had taken life much more easily, and was described to him as having been, the year before, quite well both in mind and body.

Sir Walter stopped for some weeks in Rome, rather to please his daughter than himself. He was interested in the Benedictine archives and similar treasures; but, as is well known, he could not be induced to take any interest in the remains of classical antiquity, in Rome or elsewhere in Italy. The one exception was perhaps hardly an exception, and is curious. At Pompeii he insisted on seeing everything that was to be seen, though he had to be carried through the ruins in a chair, which Sir William Gell had lent him; and he seemed fully occupied with what was before him, though he only said—"the city of the dead! the city of the dead!" While, no doubt, what really affected him was the perception that Pompeii is, in a very peculiar way, *the city of the living*.

The long galleries and slippery floors of the great Roman buildings tried his walking powers very much. But, when once fairly started homeward, he would have liked to travel night and day, and he did hurry the journey to an extent which no doubt hastened his complete breakdown. His son and daughter were afraid of one of the attacks of "apoplectic paralysis," of which he had had four or five, and he was bled, as he had been on other occasions, by his faithful manservant. This treatment was probably one main cause of his health failing in the way it did. He himself attributed his earlier complaints, which involved great bodily suffering, to the drinking habits of society in his earlier days; and, as everybody knows, he overworked his brain



mercilessly. He also gave up exercise too much latterly, when in Edinburgh; but frequent bleeding was probably not far behind as a cause of evil.

It has been remarked—it is only of recent times that the medical faculty have taken in what Rutherford taught—that all disease is less than health, and therefore to be met by keeping up the strength of the patient; and at this time there was no tradition of treatment which was of any use to Rutherford's grandson. Cutting off fermented liquors entirely in illness was doubtless injurious also.

I am sorry to see a recrudescence of "starving" in some recent works. One is inclined to think that the fillip given, at ruinous cost by bleeding, will follow. Nature seems quite able to provide bleeding herself when it is wanted. Lady Louisa Stuart, the last of the Traquair family in the direct line, who lived to within seven months of a hundred—dying then to the great disappointment of Dr Anderson, who had hoped to point to a centenarian among his patients, whose history could be authenticated from the peerage—about ten or twelve years previously had had a violent bleeding of the nose, which lasted for days; and, when stopped, was brought on again by a fall, so that everybody thought she must bleed to death. After about ten days altogether it stopped, and she does not seem to have been any the worse of it.

Sir Walter would hardly stop for the monuments of German chivalry at Inspruck, though they had been one of his objects; but was pleased with the scenery of the Rhine, the names connected with which were very familiar to him, and it was when they emerged into the lower country that the stroke came, which, Lockhart says, was the crowning blow. He was quite insensible at first; but as the one idea, that returned with consciousness, was to get home, he was lifted on board an English steamer at Rotterdam. At Venice he had still been sufficiently active to scramble down, though painfully enough, into the dungeons. Lockhart and his wife met him in London, and he knew them and other friends, but did not seem to know where he was.

This went on for about six weeks, when he was brought down by sea to Edinburgh.

Lockhart's account of Sir Walter's first seizure is a caution

as to taking his statements about him as final in all cases. It is very inaccurate, though the incident happened in the presence of some of his own family; but he wrote in London, away from nearly every one who could have answered questions about him. His wife died, after being long in bad health—just about the time the first volume of the original *Life* was published—five years after the death of her father.

The real story of the stroke is a curious one, and illustrates the force of will which, Mr Hope Scott says, impressed him more than anything else about everything Sir Walter did.

Lockhart's statement is that he was engaged, after breakfast, in a conference with an old acquaintance, Miss Young of Hawick, whose memoirs of her father he had (of course) undertaken to correct and revise for publication. That he seemed to be occupied with them for about half-an-hour; then he arose, as if he wished the lady to go; but sank down again, with his face slightly distorted. That after some minutes he rose and staggered to the drawing-room, where Miss Violet Lockhart was sitting with Anne Scott, and there fell on the floor.

That they rushed to his assistance, and that he was bled as soon as a surgeon could be fetched, and further cupped in the evening; and that he then recovered the power of speech.

But along with their sister, a younger brother of the writer had come to breakfast with the Scotts, and he remembered vividly how the door burst open, when he was sitting with the two girls, and Sir Walter came into the room, with his face quite drawn on one side, and carrying his watch in his hand. He did not speak, but walked up and down the room. There was no rushing to his assistance, if he had wanted it; for Anne Scott promptly fainted, as ladies did then, and that Violet Lockhart was attending to her, is no doubt the explanation of the very imperfect account of the circumstances, which must have come from her. The gentleman, on the other hand, remained watching Sir Walter in astonishment, and at last he heard him say "Fifteen minutes!" He had suddenly lost the power of speech, but seems to have been aware it would return, and he never seems to have lost it permanently.

The circumstance of his falling on the floor was probably unconsciously, and not unnaturally, supplied by Lockhart himself, from an imperfect recollection of what his sister had told him. The bleeding is probably only too true.

It may be remarked that while "women" of different schools are, more than anything else, the prevailing topic of the lighter sort of literature at present, this performance of Anne Scott's suggests what different varieties are possible. The delicate creature variety has been almost forgotten; but one can hardly say it would be an improvement on the ruder types now in vogue.

Anne Scott can at no time have been a good companion for a somewhat intractable invalid. An instance of her want of tact was remembered by Mr Henderson of Innerleithen, who was at Abbotsford at the time. It was probably not long before the Italian journey that Sir Walter, whose lameness was increased by every successive illness, one day fell on the marble pavement of the hall, when going out to his pony.

When he came in, he found a strip of carpet had been stretched across the hall; and he was so furious at this outward and visible sign of decadence that, as it was not removed quickly enough for him, he tore it up with his own stick.

No excuse, however—unless perhaps that he belonged to a period which rather despised scientific accuracy—can be found for Lockhart's altering a letter (he does not say from whom) so as to make the writer, with reference to Sir Walter's early engagement, or whatever it exactly was, call the lady Miss Stuart; which she not only was not, but never could have been called, as her father did not assume that name till after her marriage, and, I rather think, not till after her rather early death. Even a stronger measure, however, is his asserting, on his own authority, that her christian name was Margaret, when she was Wilhelmina Wishart Belshes, the only child of Sir John Wishart Belshes and his wife, Lady Jane Leslie, of the Rothies family, whose early acquaintance with Sir Walter's mother seems in some degree to have led to the affair.

The fullest account I have seen of the family is in one of Jervise's local histories, which, I imagine, are always good

authority, with reference to the Wishart pedigree. I think the one in question is entitled a history of Angus and Mearns, though it is too incomplete for that to be altogether a correct description.

The mother, of course, was known as Lady Jane Stuart when she renewed acquaintance with Sir Walter, after the death of his wife, and long after the death of her daughter as Lady Forbes. He did not even then much like renewing these old sorrows, in addition to all the distresses of his later life. He says in his journal that the story would no doubt be told some day, but very little seems to have been known about it by other people. The late Mrs George Dundas—whose mother, Mrs Mackenzie of Portmore, was a sister of Sir William Forbes—told Lady Russell, probably during a visit she paid at Ashiesteel, that, till the life of Sir Walter Scott was published, the ladies of the Forbes family had never known what was the matter with Lady Forbes, who had then been dead more than twenty-five years; though, as she is not named in any way in the original life, they must have had some knowledge otherwise that it was she who was referred to. The book, of course, showed that the attachment, or engagement, had been very much more serious than almost anyone was aware of.

The verses given by Lockhart in the earlier *Life* express extreme unhappiness, whether they were written by Lady Forbes before or after her marriage, or by some one else.

The late Lord Benholme, Mr Hercules Robertson Scott, when on a visit at Yair, some time before his death, related that he had stayed at Abbotsford as a young man, and that Sir Walter Scott received him with "I'm very glad to see you here, Mr Scott; your father took me in at a time when I was very glad of his hospitality!"

Though nothing more was apparently said, he knew what this referred to; that when the marriage of Miss Belshes to Sir William Forbes was announced, or known to be settled, Sir Walter had rushed down to Forfarshire, and gone to the Robertson Scotts, I suppose, at Brotherton—an elder brother of Lord Benholme's being a friend and contemporary of his at the Scotch bar. The son cannot have been at home, but he sent in his name to Mr Robertson Scott, and told him that he was a friend of his son's, and

that he wanted him to take him in for some days, which he did. It is quite imaginable that a young man of the present day might do the same thing in similar circumstances; but, before railways, this sort of matter-of-course hospitality was no doubt much commoner than it could be now. The son being his friend, the Robertson Scotts probably knew very well about the Belshes affair, especially as being neighbours of the family, at some distance.

Sir Walter stayed a week at Brotherton, and not only made his way to Sir John Belshes' at Fettercairn, but succeeded in seeing his daughter.

He was refused by her in person, and after this left Brotherton, saying that *he would be married before her*. Lord Benholme was under the impression that he had gone straight to Gilsland, and there met the lady he married; but that was not till the year after. Lord Benholme had not the slightest idea that Miss Belshes's refusal was not voluntary; but, of course, he knew the importance of Mrs Dundas's testimony.

The conclusion of the affair is somewhat like the farce after the tragedy; but is it possible to doubt that Wilhelmina Belshes is Lucy Ashton? the interview with her, the scene at the signing of the contract? or that the story *has* been told by Sir Walter himself, though in a half unconscious way? One of the curious points about it is that he dictated the *Bride of Lammermoor*—though it is one of the best constructed, as to plot, of his novels—in a state of half delirium, and did not remember afterwards what he had dictated. This did not apply to the other novels written during the same illness. He says, somewhere, that when he was dictating “the nonsense of Dugald Dalgetty,” he ceased to feel the pain of the cramp which was twisting his muscles like ropes.

(It is interesting to know how he appreciated the Major himself.) Lockhart, in the latter *Life*, gives James Ballantyne's curious memorandum about the *Bride of Lammermoor*. When printed, it came to Sir Walter as something new: being asked how it struck him, he said it seemed “monstrous gross and grotesque,” but the worst of it made him laugh, and he was reassured by knowing that his friend had been the publisher and would not have let anything very absurd pass.

The "gross and grotesque," of course, must have referred to Caleb and the Ravenswood establishment generally. And all this connects intimately with his own history. It was the want of money, or of any prospect of success at the bar, which put him out of the question as a desirable suitor for Miss Belshes.

And I do not know that the same romantic presentment of poverty occurs anywhere else. It is the ruinous expense of his father's funeral which has reduced Ravenswood to such immediate straits, while the father has suffered in the political changes of the period.

But I am inclined to think that the supposition, mentioned in the Proceedings of the Club some three or four years ago, that the position of the Ravenswood family, as suggested by that of the ruined Edgars of Wedderlie, does account for a good deal about the novel; although it is a story of a quite ordinary and modern type comparatively. The last laird and lady seem to have got the credit of ruining the family; for when it came to leaving the house for the last time, the son refused to leave the house of his ancestors in daylight, and waited till night—after his parents had started in their coach and four, which did not imply any particular extravagance, but merely the state of the roads among the hills.

His calling his hero Edgar Ravenswood looks as if Sir Walter had this story running in his head; for, though Edgar is not uncommon as a surname, I have never heard of any case of its being given as a christian name in Scotland; and his making the locality Lamnermoor had the advantage of not pointing to either of the real stories which seem to be in some sort blended in the novel. I believe every house, anywhere near the march of Berwickshire and East Lothian, claims to be Ravenswood Castle, and a few more besides; but, I imagine, this is the real one, as far as it connects with any real locality. It does not follow that Sir Walter had ever seen the place; and from what he says, one would infer that he had never travelled the high road between Edinburgh and Berwick.

He says he had never seen Fastcastle but from the sea; and though he says (in his notes to the novels) that it may as well be Wolf's Crag as any other place, the description

is much more like that of St. Abbs Head, with the steep slope inland. From the novel, one would say that he supposed the plain of East Lothian to extend into Berwickshire, while it seems hardly possible that the Dunglass and Pease deans should have left no impression, if he had ever seen them.

He is known to have been as far as Tynningham, on the Edinburgh side of Dunbar. It is certain that he never was at the house at Dunglass, though the tradition has arisen that he visited the neighbourhood with Sir James Hall, the geologist, whom he succeeded as President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

On what grounds I do not know, Lockhart says, that Sir Walter seems to have had the idea, before his illness, of writing a novel on the subject of the bride who stabbed her bridegroom. There undoubtedly must have been a certain similarity between the case of Lord Rutherford and his own, in the respect, particularly, that the parents seem not to have been agreed about their daughter's affairs. Whatever degree of blame may be attributable to Lady Jane Belshes, for allowing so hopeless an attachment to go on under her eyes, she was probably in some degree captivated by the attractive young man. Words are hardly strong enough to express the condemnation due to her husband; old Mr Scott, with his lofty scrupulousness, having warned him that his son was making love to his daughter, but being unable to persuade him that the case was at all serious or worth attending to.

Sir Walter says, in the notes to the novels written in his last years, that one tradition asserted that it was the mother, and not the father, who favoured Lord Rutherford; but the form of the story which he followed was probably that originally known to him.

It was both a Rutherford tradition in some degree—his mother having told the traditional story, comparing it with that of the novel, to Mr and Mrs Scott of Harden, who must have been in the Waverley secret only a few days before her last illness—and also the main facts were known to her and her family by a very direct line of tradition. Her aunt, Miss Margaret Swinton of Swinton, who lived to see her grand-nephew grown up, had actually

talked of the tragedy with the brother who took the bride to church. This lady's name seems to have been accidentally omitted in the notes to the "Bride of Lammermoor"; but in those to "Peveril of the Peak," where another curious experience of hers is utilised, it is mentioned that she was the person. The family seem to have made no secret whatever of the story. Of course the brother was not bound to say how far he considered his parents to blame; but what he did tell Miss Swinton was that he had never ceased to reproach himself for not speaking, at the time, of the deadly cold of his sister's hand, as she rode behind him with her arm round his waist. It seems to have struck him at the time, but his head was so full of the important part he was playing in the procession, and of his new clothes, that it did not make much impression on him.

Of course we know that the parents would not have broken off or delayed their daughter's marriage for any notion of their boy's, but all these circumstances are very natural and probable. It is probably a fact that it was his whinger which the bride had secreted. If he was then fourteen, he must have been born about 1655.

In Mr Andrew Lang's edition of "The Secret Commonwealth"—by the Rev. Robert Kirke—he quotes a letter from a Psychical Researcher of the 17th century, in which he relates that the Duke of Lauderdale had told him of a remarkable occurrence in the family of Lord Stair; and Lord Stair himself coming in, was called upon to tell the story, which he did with a very grave face, though unfortunately, the writer says, he could not trust his memory to give the particulars. The line taken seems to have been to regard it as a case of supernatural "possession," though the bride seems to have known well enough what she meant; though it would have been wiser to have given the bridegroom the strong hint she did on the other side of the ceremony which bound them both. She never could have married her lover in any circumstances, for one odd peculiarity of the case was that the lover was *uncle* of the husband.

Of course if Miss Belshes had been a young woman of a different type, she would at any rate not have married the somewhat ill-used Sir William Forbes; and it seems



probable the novel is really entirely a long meditated explanation and exculpation of her conduct. (Sir Walter told Lookhart that Conochar—the unfortunate young chief in the “Fair Maid of Perth,” who runs away in extreme danger, and subsequently commits suicide—was intended for his brother Daniel, on whose weaknesses he thought he had been too severe in his lifetime. I have little doubt that the Gow Chrom, the lame champion of the town, embodies one side of his own personality.) Lady Forbes had been dead eight or nine years when the novel was published—dying of consumption, even as “Lady Baldoon, younger,” did; though in the earlier case it was much more rapid.

There is a totally different view of the circumstances in existence, and it is given in the notes to the novel. This is nothing less than a congratulatory poem on the marriage, followed by a similar lament for the death of the bride, a month later, at the house of her husband's father. (Preserved in Symson's *Account of Galloway*.) There is no trace whatever of this in the novel, though the rejoicings might have been made highly tragical: there is something of this kind in Kenilworth. But not only would this have altered the character of the story, but I am inclined to think that Sir Walter had, for the time, entirely forgotten these documents, in the half-delirious state in which he dictated it. They were no part of his early knowledge of the incidents. It was probably to them that an interesting recollection of Mrs Stewart Mackenzie (Lady Hood's) referred. She remembered overtaking him—“young Walter Scott”—walking out from Edinburgh to Dalkeith, on the occasion of some festivity there, and giving him a lift; and on this occasion he was full of talk and interest about the discovery, he had lately made, of some documents concerning the marriage of Sir David Dunbar's son to Sir James Dalrymple's daughter.

She appears to have thought it was his first knowledge of the story, and probably, subsequently, identified him as the author of the “Bride of Lammermoor” from his using it. And no doubt the discovery would much increase the interest of his mother and grand-aunt's recollections for him.

It should be mentioned here that David Dunbar seems to have been as unlike the Bucklaw of the tale, as one tolerably honest man can be to another.

Fourteen years after his first marriage, and probably not very long after his second—to Lady Eleanor Montgomery, a daughter of the Eglinton family (the date of this is not given by the peerages)—comes the elegy on his own death, by a fall from his horse between Edinburgh and Leith. Whether the other poems are from the same hand I do not remember; but this is by the Episcopal clergyman of the parish, the period being that of the Restoration. David Dunbar must have been something of a character, for the clergyman bewails him as his *only hearer*. Whether this was literally the case or not, the curates, as the Episcopal clergy were called, were by no means unpopular in some parts of Galloway. Much must have depended on the individuals.

But the catalogue of Mr Dunbar's accomplishments is so extraordinary that it shows at least how high the Cavalier ideal was.

The estate of Baldoon was eventually inherited by his only child, Mary Dunbar, who married Lord Basil Hamilton. It was sold by her great-grandson, the Earl of Selkirk, to provide funds for his not very successful attempt to found a colony, which should be a home for the exiled Highlanders in North America.

The money, or great part of it, was returned to the family when the Hudson's Bay Company was wound up. The unexpected difficulties encountered by Lord Selkirk in America—it is to be remembered that his elder brother, Burns' Lord Daer, had broken his heart over the turn taken by the French Revolution, in which, like many other young men in England, he had implicitly believed as a work of regeneration—does not much affect the value of his opinion, in his small work on *Emigration*, that the clearance of the Highlands was in the main a necessary consequence of the change of times after 1745. The statistics given by the Bailie in Rob Roy are known to be from some book of the period; and besides blackmail from individuals, subsidies both from the English and French governments, kept a fighting population, a possible army, on foot in the north.

Of his conversation with Sir Walter, Lord Benholme remembered their talking of Queen Mary, and Sir Walter saying that he thought the ride to the Hermitage was the thing most against her.

If his whole history was not made up of the oddest contradictions, it would be almost incredible that Sir Walter should have attended the Jedburgh assizes, for some five-and-thirty years, without discovering that Mary had sat through them (though nobody was hanged on that occasion) between Bothwell's being wounded and her going to the Hermitage Castle; her visit to which was of an official character, it being a royal fortress.

The feature of the most opposite characteristics is strongly put by the living critic, whose opinion is perhaps the best worth having (when, to use an expression of his own, one agrees with it.) "Shirley" says there is the strongest evidence against Sir Walter Scott's being the author of *Waverley*. That is, of course, circumstantial evidence. In fact there is something in this, for it does explain incidentally how the *Waverley* secret came to be kept at all.

To return to his view of Queen Mary, Lord Benholme's recollection is fully borne out by an examination of the two histories of Scotland he wrote in his latter years. In the "*Tales of a Grandfather*," the ride to the Hermitage is given as in the narrative which was issued for political purposes (it is to be remembered that Moray, who accompanied Mary, was also the witness in the Chastelard case) while in the history written for Lardner's *Cyclopædia* the facts are correctly given.

There is one case in which Lockhart's general absence of precision seems to have misled those very careful writers, Myers and Gurney; that is, they take one of his rounded phrases as a statement of fact. (See *Phantasms of the Living*; *Auditory Cases*, Note.)

He gives the letter in full, written from the court at Selkirk, in which Sir Walter complains of, and wonders at, the noise which had gone on in the half-finished rooms at Abbotsford, on two successive nights; and part of the subsequent one, in which he remarks on its coincidence as to time with the death of George Bullock, a London decorator, who fitted up the public rooms at Abbotsford,

and who had made himself very pleasant while staying in the house there.

On the second night, not the first, Lady Scott was so frightened that Sir Walter took down his great-grandfather's broadsword and went through the empty rooms, finding no one, though the sound, he says, had exactly resembled that of half-a-dozen men hard at work putting up boards and furniture. The reason why they did not think much of it the first night is explained by what was remembered in the country, that they fully thought the servants were holding high jinks in the newly-built part of the house. Lady Scott had them up the next morning to scold them for making such a disturbance, but they succeeded in convincing her that none of them had been there.

These noises took place, on both nights, about two o'clock in the morning, and Bullock died about that hour in London; but nobody at present knows whether he died on the first or the second night (that is, on the morning of the 29th or of the 30th of April 1818.)

I am almost convinced that it was the first, from Lockhart's saying, that the occurrence had impressed Sir Walter much more than appears from his letter; while indeed it is evident enough, from that, that he connected the noises with the death. Myers and Gurney state that the death took place on the second night, and therefore that the noises could have had no connection with it; but the only ground I can see for this supposition is that, Lockhart says, the death took place at the same hour when Sir Walter sallied from his chamber with Beardie's Killiecrankie claymore. It is difficult for enquirers of the present day to believe that a writer of the period of Macaulay and Carlyle would be capable of saying *at the same hour*, with necessarily meaning that it was the same *night*!

It is possible that Lockhart himself never knew on which night the death took place; he was not acquainted with Sir Walter at the time, having been introduced to him, as he records, about a month after this.

Mr Andrew Lang, when he edited the *Secret Commonwealth*, had not been able to settle the point about the death; and I have myself ascertained that there is no mention of it in the file of the *Times* at the British Museum, searching up

to the end of May. It was not till long after this time that public intimations superseded private ones. There must, however, I should think, have been some trade journal in which it would be noticed.

There is something of the same kind of uncertainty about the locality. Sir Walter says he had been grumbling at Tenterden Street and all its works, and Lockhart explains this to have been the street in which Bullock's manufactory was situated; while he subsequently refers to the death as what had happened in Tenterden Street. A high-class tradesman was more likely to be living over his works then than now, but it does not follow from this that Bullock was. Sir Walter's grumbling is of interest; that the doors and windows for Abbotsford were much in arrear would account for the failing brain of his poor friend worrying itself about the unfinished work.

There is a third possibility about the death; we know no details, and there may have been a seizure of some kind on the first night, followed by a fatal one on the second. Sir Walter's full and graphic account of the disturbance, written before a letter could have reached him from London, makes the matter of some scientific importance.

N.B.—Since the above was written, on referring to the *Life*, I observe Lockhart does say that Bullock's death did happen on the *night* and at the *hour* when Scott sallied from his chamber, etc.

While anyone who has had to study Lockhart's style, knows that this means nothing whatever in the way of scientific statement, and that it is quite likely that he did not know which night it was himself; this certainly justifies Myers and Gurney in supposing the death took place on the second night.

(It appears—which, I think, was not generally known—that Lockhart was an intimate personal friend of Carlyle's, showing the justice of Mr Leland's estimate of Carlyle in his social capacity; which was that he would have been much pleasanter if he had had somebody to put on the gloves with him—that is, have a fight—once a week, for Lockhart would certainly give him as good as he got.)

The fact of a rather large addition having been made to the house at Ashiesteel, with the natural consequence that

the older parts of the house are used in a different way from what they were by Sir Walter and Lady Scott, sometimes makes it difficult to convince people that it is perfectly well known what their arrangements in the main were. They were probably by no means the same as those of the Russells; Colonel Russell, in whose time the previous addition to the house had been made, had a large family, and being long in bad health, probably but little company. Mr and Mrs Scott, as they were at the time of their occupancy, had four young children, and an inordinate number of visitors.

Ashiesteele was by no means so out of the way at this time as might be supposed; one of the coaches between London and Edinburgh crossed the Yair bridge, three miles off.

And, among others, it is known that Miss Anne Russell was there on one occasion, and it is quite probable that some of the family were there most seasons.

Miss Christian Rutherford, who was then living with her nieces at Lauriston Tower, near Edinburgh, is recorded to have been at Ashiesteele when Sir Walter was writing the first chapters of "*Waverley*." She insisted on knowing what he was getting up so early for; he must have lately adapted the practice, for the Wordsworths had called at the Lasswade House, two years before, and found nobody up.

She, like his other principal advisers, and, for that matter, perhaps most readers, was unfavourably impressed by those first chapters; in fact it is intelligible enough that he laid it aside and eventually published it anonymously. But she was, of course, good authority as to his doing his early writing in the dining-parlour, though the window which his greyhounds used to get in and out of has now become a press. The older part of the house is not much altered, except in such details.

It is quite possible that the view of Caddonlee, with the old ramparts, and of the valley beyond it, from the back of the house, may have had something to do with a singularly uncomfortable arrangement of the Scotts.

The family bedroom was in the gable of the west wing, but Sir Walter's dressing-room, where he kept his books, was the furthest of three small bedrooms opening out of one

another on the other side of the staircase. The nearest, which would have been the most obvious for the purpose, was somewhat the largest, and therefore most available as a guest-chamber; and the second, which was then quite a small bedroom, was the only one of the three which had the advantage of a fireplace. This and the third, which was then somewhat larger than it is now, and seems to have suited Sir Walter's purpose well enough, could also be reached by another stair.

And both had the view down the valley. But when either of the bedrooms was occupied, Sir Walter could only get to his dressing-room by going down a steep stair, along the passage on the ground floor, and up another stair, lighted only by panes of glass in the wall of the dressing-room. The separate entrance of this was done away by the shifting of the partition, which changed the two rooms into a good bedroom with a small dressing-room.

It is quite possible this change might not have been made if it had been known how specially connected the dressing-room was with Sir Walter; but there was no one at all in the way who remembered it, and certainly no one would have conjectured that the rooms were used in this way.

It is rather to be regretted that we do not know more of this part of Sir Walter's life; his reputation rested, ostensibly at least, chiefly on the poems which he was writing at this period. The only visitor who seems to have left any record of his visit at Ashiesteel is Mr Murray, and him he took one day to Melrose, and the next to the Eildon hills, which is quite in keeping with the fact that his interest in the country was in Roxburghshire.

It was only under pressure from the Lord Lieutenant that he came to live in his sherifffdom of Selkirk. *Marmion* is the one of his works undoubtedly connected with Ashiesteel, and it is generally the solitude of the country that he dwells upon. He had previously located the *Lay of the Minstrel* at Newark, but as the story was written for the Buccleugh family, that was the natural frame, as Branksholme was the natural scene of it. As to the visitors, the Wordsworths were in Scotland the year before the Scotts moved to Ashiesteel from Lasswade. It was probably one of the "old halls" Dorothy Wordsworth mentions having seen from the

other side of the river; and in one of his letters to O. K. Sharpe, Sir Walter regrets never having had a visit from him at Ashiesteel, which they were leaving the next year. With regard to visitors who were actually there, Sir Walter says that Miss Lydia White's sketches represented the mountains of Selkirkshire as standing on their apexes; and he concludes one of his letters on seeing her carriage approaching Ashiesteel, probably by the Cliff road, as the way to the ford from Clovenfords is called—meaning no doubt *cleft*. The interesting fact that Mrs Siddons was at Ashiesteel may be mentioned in some of the biographies, but it is best known from Sir Walter's recollection of the dignified solemnity with which she addressed the footboy at dinner. "You've brought me water, boy—I asked for beer!"

Richard Heber, the great book collector, was at Ashiesteel.

Sir Walter mentions, in one of his letters, that "Robert Dundas and his lady" were to be at Ashiesteel. This is explained by the editor to mean the son and daughter-in-law of Lord Melville, long his neighbour near Lasswade. It may or may not have been during this visit that a droll occurrence happened, which was witnessed by the late Mrs Pringle of Yair. When on a visit at Yair, long before her marriage, she had dined with the Scotts at Ashiesteel, with the rest of the Yair party, to meet, she said, the Dundases of Arniston; but as the Melville Dundases were their first cousins, and she herself very young at the time, it is most likely the guests were the couple designated.

The peculiarity of the entertainment was that the principal course of the dinner consisted of *four legs of mutton*. The history of this robust repast was that the supplies, which were to have come from Edinburgh, presumably by the coach, had not arrived; the Scotts had sent round the country to raise the materials for a dinner, and everybody had sent legs of mutton. Sir Walter seems not to have been prepared for this, and was intensely diverted by it, and made such a complete joke of it that everybody was delighted. Fish and fowl of some sort there would be for the other courses, for when there was no restriction as to netting, trout fresh from the Tweed would almost certainly be available; in fact in spite of, or perhaps rather in



consequence of, the caution the fish have learnt from many anglers, they are there still for those who can catch them.

Mr James Skene and his family seem to have been at Ashiesteel every year the Scotts were there; but, as familiar friends, they would not naturally write accounts of these visits to other people.

A reminiscence, probably, of the limitations of Ashiesteel before there was any bridge near it, was the recollection of Mr Blore, the architect employed by Sir Walter, at Abbotsford, that Miss Scott, which must mean Sophia, suffered for years from rheumatism, from her having waded the burn without taking off her shoes and stockings.

This might, of course, have happened in many places, but much the most likely is the crossing of the Peel burn, at the foot of what was then the very steep road leading to the Peel and Ashiesteel. The present small bridge seems to have been built when the present line of road was made, taking a more gradual slope, lower down the bank, but cutting across the Peel crofts, as the level in front of the house was called, which the old road went round. Where the house for the water-bailiffs now is, there was a small cottage with a shop, which sold liquorice and similar delicacies.

The burn must have been a considerable obstacle to communication, for it is only at its lowest that it can ever be crossed dry-shod; and when at all in flood, even the ford might be rather formidable for a carriage. There was a recollection of the Ashiesteel family being very nearly prevented getting to some festivity at Yair by the Peel burn having risen; they certainly got there, but how I do not know. Supposing the Tweed did not happen to have been in flood, there would have been no difficulty in crossing the Ashiesteel ford, and then re-crossing by the Yair bridge, which was built before this.

Stilting was a favourite amusement of Colonel Russell's family, but it is doubtful whether it was ever of any practical use, or was much more than an excuse for getting wet.

That Traquair was the regular place of worship of the Ashiesteel family, both before and after Sir Walter's time, is accounted for by its being the only church from which they were not liable to be cut off by a very moderate rise

of the rivers. The distance must be fully eight miles; but Galashiels, the nearest town, which was five by the road through the ford, was as much when the round by the Yair bridge had to be made, and, of course, at an earlier time there was probably no bridge either at Yair or over the Ettrick at Selkirk, which was about eight miles from Ashiesteel also. At present, by what is called Ashiesteel bridge, though the end rests on Yair ground, Galashiels is rather further than by the old direct road. Walking over the hill the parish church of Yarrow is also about eight miles from Ashiesteel; by the road much more.

The Scotts, who had always lived near a church till they came to Ashiesteel, considered the distance to Traquair impossible, and Sir Walter regularly read the service of the Church of England, on Sunday, to his family and guests.

A whimsical mistake, regarding the Russells of the south of Scotland, is recorded by the most systematic writer we have in the lighter matters of family and local history.

In a small volume of genealogical studies, entitled "Scottish Surnames," Mr Paterson says, in a note to page 56:—

'In a MS. collection by Balfour, Lyon King of Arms, 1630, the Russell arms are "Argent, a cheveron between three greinplovers, sable," which is precisely the same as given in the Harleian MS. The arms of the Russells of Kingseat were "Argent, a cheveron between three powets, within a border, all sable. *Crest*, a fountain proper. *Motto*, *Agitatione Purgatur*." The inference is therefore strong that they were originally of that ilk.'

The Lyon King of Arms meant is, I suppose, Sir James Balfour, and his MS. is in the Advocate's Library. And he or his authority has read *powets*—that is, powheads or tadpoles—as *pewits*, which are also called green plovers.

The Russells of the north of Scotland have quite different arms, and they are in part the same as those of the Duke of Bedford.

The notion of regarding the Duke of Bedford as the head of the Scotch Russells has nothing absurd in it so far that, when the clan was a municipal reality, it was often made up in a very miscellaneous way, as a matter of choice or convenience, and did not, except theoretically, imply relationship. Here the importance of heraldry comes in.

Whether the powheads of the Russells of the south of Scotland ever had any particular meaning or not, the frog, as a device used by the Roman jewellers, is said to be an emblem of the resurrection.

It is known to have been an Etruscan device, and some such meaning would have been quite in keeping with the sentiment of Etruscan art, which, as it is, we know chiefly from the tombs. But the conjectural meanings attached to objects of art in Italy are apt to be of an ecclesiastical character.

A French family of Roussels have three small fish in a cantle in the upper part of the shield, the arms otherwise being different.

Tadpoles are called *têtards* or *grenouillettes* in French.

It is whimsical also that the Latin name of *Ranunculus* or tadpole, given by the botanists to a plant of the buttercup kind, or closely allied to it—the unusually dark colour of whose flower does very much resemble the black of the tadpole—should have become the scientific name of the whole great class to which a large part of our hardy garden flowers belong. Not only the aconite and the Christmas rose, the columbines and peonies, but the Clematis; and what is still more unlike the buttercups, the larkspur and also the monks-hood, the *Aconitum Napellus* of medicine, are *Ranunculacæ*.

I observe, in one of the extracts from the just-published life of Mr John Lockhart, that three English ladies (who, by their names, must have hailed from Cornwall) staying at Melrose in 1817, were visited by the Scotts, the Constables, and Miss Russell of Ashiesteel. This was probably just the party from Abbotsford; the Constables might have been spending the summer somewhere in the neighbourhood, but Miss Russell could not have been at Ashiesteel, which was unfurnished, except as far as it was inhabited by the shepherd and his wife.

There seems no recollection of Miss Rutherford and her nieces ever having stayed at Melrose; while it must have been on a visit, either this summer or within a year or two of this time, that Lady Scott impressed Miss Jane Russell's assistance to help her with some work the gardener absolutely refused to do.

Lady Scott was very full of an arbour she had had constructed beside the river, and wanted the gardener to transplant a large hop-plant from the garden to grow over it. This he would not do; and she waited till he left his work in the evening, and then asked Miss Russell to come and help her, and they two would transplant the hop. Miss Russell assured her it would not stand transplanting in full leaf, but Lady Scott declared, if they watered it well, it would. So being one of the most good-natured, as well as one of the most sensible of women, she went with her. The hop was very heavy, and got much broken, and they got very muddy; but eventually the hop was planted on the bower, and watered. The next morning it was hanging quite dead, though, being a vigorous plant, it came up the next spring. The indignation of the gardener may be imagined—"Ma bonny hop!"

In spite of this unpracticalness, Lady Scott had a real liking for the garden, as for other amenities; and the old gardener was said never to have cared for his work after her death.

The circumstance of the large hop-plant in the Abbotsford garden shows the Scotts had been settled some time at Abbotsford; and two or three years later Miss Russell, with her surviving sister, went abroad to the Italian waters—remaining some years on the Continent—so it is rather likely that this incident happened at the time Miss Russell is mentioned as being in Melrose, probably with the Scotts.

There were hops at Ashiesteel when the Scotts were there—planted by Sir Walter's aunt, Mrs Russell—and they are there still, at the top of the steep bank opposite the middle window of the present drawing-room. They were at one time reduced to very small plants; but since the plan has been adopted of throwing weeds and other rubbish over the bank, to counteract its occasional slipping, they have grown much better in the soil so produced. They must have been planted in the ornamental hedge of barberries and wild plums.

The hops on the fence of the small flower-garden, which garland the heavy Irish yews, and the hop-arches in the upper garden, were all planted by a gardener who had long left Ashiesteel, but who only died within the present year.

One of the advantages of the present garden of Ashiesteel, its being raised above the river-damp, was shown by the scarlet *Tropæolum speciosum*—whose decorative effects Lady Scott would have highly appreciated—having been entirely killed at the house, some fifty feet above the river, though not at the garden, fifty feet higher up, by the frost of 1895.

It is hard to say—except that he is included in the atmosphere of myth which surrounds everything connected with Sir Walter Scott—why the statement should have been lately made that Lockhart was latterly not on good terms with his daughter, Mrs Hope Scott. He died in her house, a bed having been put up for him on the ground floor, not in the dining-room where Sir Walter died, but in a small room beyond it; on which occasion the carpenter remarked that Abbotsford was “a vary uncomfortable hoose for ony person in trouble” (of course before the addition.)

And what is perhaps more to the purpose, I believe he had been staying at Abbotsford in the previous year, that between his daughter's change of religion and his own death.

Mr Hope Scott speaks of the depth and tenderness of feeling which his father-in-law had under an almost fierce reserve. And he himself said to one of his brothers, all men of very social tendencies—whether or not on the occasion of some particular family affliction, I do not know—that he and others like him could not possibly understand what men like himself suffered.

To return to Sir Walter Scott; the mythical quality is quite a personal one, and by no means common to all celebrities. There is an interesting article on the subject in the “Athenæum,” about June 1896, reviewing a book on the myths and romances of Alexander the Great, which not only spread over most of the old world, but must apparently have begun in his own lifetime.

The writer remarks that if the career of Napoleon was not so thoroughly known, it would probably have lent itself to the same kind of embellishment as having somewhat like Alexander's. But I do not see any traces of this, though some of the many books about him are known not to be accurate.

There is nothing of the kind about the Duke of Wellington

nor about Byron. Cromwell has it in a considerable degree, especially in Scotland; while he and Dr Johnson are said to be the notabilities popularly remembered in London. Wallace has it in the highest degree; he is credited with hurling boulders and splitting rocks in such a way that one wonders what the people really did believe about him. Bruce has it not; while Arthur has nearly disappeared behind it. What all these worthies have most in common is geniality, and this has probably something to do with it.

So far had the mythical element appeared in his own lifetime, that Sir Walter himself was shown Fergus MacIvor's dungeon in Carlisle Castle; though the warder had the grace to be much startled when he was told who the visitor was.

A house which Lockhart had for his children at Portobello one summer, has become that in which Sir Walter wrote several of his works, at least that is the only house at Portobello which he seems to have had anything to do with. That pointed out is nearly opposite the parish church, with a narrow lane on the north side of it.

The same story, of his having written several of his novels there, has arisen regarding Langleyford, in Northumberland, which must apparently be the farmhouse in the heart of Cheviot, where he and his uncle went for goat's whey quarters, as it used to be called. It is rather to be regretted that he does not name it; but, drolly enough, he says in his letter that there was not a pen in the house till he shot the crow whose quill he was writing with.

His faithful retainer, Tom Purdie, seems to be fully included in the same ever-widening interest, and statements of the same kind appear about him.

It is a curious question whether Sir Walter knew, or at least took in, that Caddonlee—a triangular rising ground on the Torwoodlee property, in sight from Ashiesteel on the other side of the river—seems to have been the gathering-place of the Scotch army before the time of Robert Bruce.

The chronic war with England, which only began with Edward I., necessitated a different system.

According to Jordan Fantosme, William the Lion assembled his army at this place—by its old spelling of Caldenlee—for the disastrous invasion of Northumberland, in which he was taken prisoner.

Matthew Paris is the authority for his son, Alexander II., more than seventy years later, having assembled a force (so large that the numbers must certainly be exaggerated) at Caldenlee for an invasion of England, which had so little result that it does not seem to be even mentioned by Mr Skene in *Celtic Scotland*.

William's capture, on the contrary, is one of the most important events in the history of Scotland, for it was then that the English claim of homage for Scotland became a reality. That he should have given up the independence of Scotland to obtain his own liberation seems almost too bad to be believed; though, as Sir Walter says (I think in his second history) the king was then so completely the organ of government that the country could not get on without him; while it has been suggested that he might have resigned in favour of his brother David. But I believe his reason to have been one which has never been fully recognised, and that it was so far a religious one. William's capture followed within two days after Henry II. had done penance in England for his share in the death of Thomas a Becket; and I have no doubt that it was to the might of the saint, the martyr of Rome, that he surrendered. The independence of Scotland, as is well known, was restored for a very moderate money payment by Richard Cœur-de-Lion, when he wanted money for his Crusade; as Sir Walter also says, besides having the advantage of leaving a friend behind him instead of an enemy, Richard was not the man to forget that William had been partly fighting on his behalf; his father wished to disinherit him in favour of John. He offered, however, the bribe of admitting the old Scotch, that is Pictish, claim on Northumberland.

The odd thing is such a writer as Mr E. W. Robertson (see *Scotland under her Early Kings*) having noticed the fact that William's abbey of Arbroath, where he is buried, was dedicated to St. Thomas a Becket, and inferred from this that he acquiesced, in the supernatural theory of his capture, without seeing that this was of course the reason of his otherwise infamous submission.

The English claims, as I have said before, certainly must have originated in Oswy of Northumberland, like one of his brothers, having married a Pictish princess. The more

genuine historians of Scotland know that Oswy reigned over the east of Scotland as far as Caithness; but they had not noticed that the name of his first wife is given in one of the pedigrees. His son Egfrid, the son of Malsneth, might have had a fair chance, in the clash of races and laws, of carrying on the kingdom of the Picts in the male line; but as the husband of St. Etheldreda, who, though a widow when he married her, would not live with him, and eventually retired into the disorderly convent on St. Abbs Head, left no descendants. A chapel of St. Etheldreda was one of the landmarks of the border line, but I do not suppose that had anything to do with these facts; though they probably had something to do with Athelstan's invasion of Scotland.

The Scotch claim on Northumberland, and the conquest and union of Cumbria—the motive of which seems to have been to weaken the Scandinavian kingdom, which had alternative capitals at Dublin and York—tended to keep up disputes about territory.

To return to Caddonlee; it seems an unlikely meeting-place now, but with the old roads it was very central. The men of the south-western counties would come down the Tweed, and those of Lothian across Soutra. Of the two old fords of the Tweed, that at the mouth of the Caddon is still called the King Ford. The fort on Caddonlee seems to be Roman, from the top of a lava-quern found in it.

In the Statistical Account of the parish of Yarrow, written by the late Dr Russell, I believe when assistant to his father, the curious circumstance is mentioned that—after the numerous cairns on the moor called Annan's Treat (or more correctly, Annan Street, as part of the road into Annandale) were removed in the course of cultivation—Sir Walter began to connect the two standing-stones, which were not interfered with, and are still to be seen, with the duel between Scott of Thirlstane and Scott of Tushielaw, which is the theme of the best known of the Yarrow ballads; although it was well known that that had taken place on Dewchar Swire, some way lower down in the valley of the Yarrow. This was a very mild instance of his powers of self-deception compared to that remembered at Traquair, where it used to be alleged that he regretted



much not being able to acquire the large ornamental knocker on the principal door, because, he said, *Montrose's hand had been on it*. Montrose undoubtedly did halt at Traquair after the battle of Philiphaugh; but the date on the knocker is part of the design, and stands out large as 1705, just sixty years later than that event.

This extraordinary power of seeing things as he wished them, even in what may be called his own especial line, is not without a bearing on his business affairs. When people talk of his misfortunes, they are probably not generally aware that, whatever he was earning, he was buying land, and building, and constantly entertaining, all at the same time; anyone of which has often ruined a man of fortune, which he was not.

With regard to the Yarrow Standing-stones, it appears likely that the clearance of the cairns had taken place some time before he came into Selkirkshire. The stone with a large rude inscription, now placed upright between the two standing-stones, was only found in ploughing the ground; and if Leyden examined it before he went to India in 1803, the moor must have assumed its present agricultural aspect before the Scotts came to Ashiesteel. That Sir Walter knew the Yarrow valley previously is both probable and certain; on one of his visits at Ashiesteel, he had with him a sketch of Newark Tower and some other views, done by himself. He was anxious to acquire the power of drawing, having had two different masters, but never made much progress. He relates, humorously, how an engraving of Hermitage Castle was made from a sketch of his.

His failing to buy Broadmeadows on the Yarrow, as has always been said in the country, was the turning-point of his history; there were no small proprietors at hand willing to be bought out at fancy prices, while the estate itself was very much larger than the original Abbotsford.

But more than this; it was the money received for the property he had inherited at Kelso—which was not sufficient for the purchase—which was invested in the Ballantyne firm in Edinburgh, of which the great evil seems to have been the facilities it afforded for raising money.

It should be added that neither Sir Walter's relegating these post-Roman Standing-stones to a much later period,

nor his being indifferent to the classical remains of Italy, prevented his being most anxious to acquire the well-known altar dedicated to Silvanus by Caius Arrius Domitianus, found at the Red Abbey Stead, at the foot of the Eildon hills.

The proprietor would not part with it, and when the estate of Drygrange was sold, the altar travelled with the family to Ross Priory, on Loch Lomond.

The other altars from Newstead, now in the Museum in Edinburgh, are said to have been found in making the railway about 1848. Lockhart remarks Sir Walter's anxiety to identify his daughter-in-law's property of Lochore with the Urbs Orrea of the Romans.

Dr Collingwood Bruce regretted, in one of his Rhind Lectures, that Sir Walter should have built into his courtyard wall, exposed to the weather, the stone which is the only record of the Twenty-third Legion having been in Britain. The number is partly gone, but the well-known name of the legion, Primigenia, is legible. It is only presumed that it comes from the neighbouring station of Newstead.

But the altar of Arrius Domitianus is perhaps better where it is, as long as it is distinctly understood to have come from Newstead.

The dedication to Silvanus, the god of woods and hunting, has a certain local character, for the kennels of the fox-hounds are even now within two or three miles of Newstead.

It shows how little one should take things for granted that none of the notices of the Silvanus altar, that I have seen, give the name of the centurion correctly. Of course it would be obvious to a specialist in Latin inscriptions that CARRIUS stood for Caius Arrius; but until Dr Hardy pointed this out, and that not in print, I do not think it was to be found anywhere. The C is not exactly an initial in our sense, but is the recognised sign for Caius.

It is worth pointing out that while Sir Walter's connecting the Yarrow Standing-stones with the well-known Scott duel might throw a doubt on the tradition that Ker of Cessford was killed at the Standing-stone on the Abbotsford property, Lockhart says he had repeatedly heard him tell how his father had shown it him as a boy—"Something in your

line, Walter." It does not follow that the tradition was true; ancient Standing-stones seem to have been pressed into the service of visitors both at Flodden and Killiecrankie. "The gentlemen like best to hear he was killed at the big stane."

From Sir Walter's theory about the Standing-stones in Yarrow, it seems evident he never had any idea of the kind of interest attaching to the inscription, as a very early one, and apparently one belonging to what may be roughly called the Arthurian period.

(Though he seems fully to have recognised the Catrail as the frontier of Cumbria, which he says extended to about Melrose. The suggestion seems to have been originally Whitaker's.)

It was the late Dr John Alexander Smith who examined the inscription scientifically; while it was almost a chance that—looking in an old Latin dictionary, with a view to the engraving of it furnished to the Club from one of the photographs fortunately taken of the cast, in Edinburgh, before it was painted over—I came upon the late Latin word *Memoria*, for a tomb, an actual sepulchre. Dr Hardy subsequently followed up this word, which it appears is used by St. Augustine. And since then at least two inscriptions have turned up in Wales and Cornwall, containing the word in exactly this sense.

The first, found at Lewannick, some miles from Launceston, in Cornwall, is engraved in the *Illustrated Archaeologist* for September 1894. It is a rough, upright pillar stone, engraved in precisely the same large staggered capitals as those of the Yarrow inscription, "*Ingenui Memoria*"—the tomb of one *Ingenuus*. There is an Ogham inscription on the edge of the stone, which, if I remember right, is merely the name repeated.

The second specimen is given in the same journal in the following year, after its junction with the *Reliquary*. It was found at Llanfallteg, on the borders of Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire, and seems to be a flat stone. It is in one way the best of the three; while one cannot say, without seeing the stones themselves, whether either is more distinct than the Yarrow inscription—*Ingenuus* is at present unknown to us otherwise—and though the Scotch example perhaps

appeals most to the imagination, the heroes commemorated, or at least one of them, have become half mythical, along with much else belonging to Scotch Cumbria—the North, as the Romanised Britons called it.

While the Welsh stone would appear to be the monument of the Welsh prince called Vortipore by Gildas, and addressed by him, in his usual undesirable style, as a contemporary. The inscription, which was deciphered by Mr Lawes, and subsequently submitted to Principal Rhys (who also confirmed the reading of the Ingenuus stone) reads “*Memoria Voteporigis Protictoris*,” and the Ogham on the edge “*Votecorigis*.”

The Celts used *Rex*, *Regis*, very freely, as closely resembling their own *rhys* and *rich*; and the title of Protector may be intended as an equivalent of Guledic, the elected leader of the Cymri. Certain other inscriptions are known, which begin “*In Memoria*.”

It should be added that Principal Rhys had, some years before, been in Scotland, very much for the purpose of seeing the Yarrow inscription, of which both the engraving and the photograph were afterwards sent him; and though I believe he does not accept the whole reading, it was he who pointed out that the G of *Dumnogenus* is a *tailed* one. In a reprint of the engraving this feature was inserted, and the upper part of the D, which is too distinct, omitted. Some of the Welsh scholars seem to me to be misled by theories of Celtic mythology and local deities, which have no foundation but an early prejudice in favour of the old Welsh tales, the main features of which are drawn from the copious Scandinavian mythology. Further, Principal Rhys goes by the stone itself, which, even when cleared of lichen, is probably less distinct than the photograph from a cast made between thirty and forty years before, under the loving eyes of Dr Russell.

I give the reading of the Yarrow inscription for comparison with the others.

“*Hic Memoria Ceteloi Finnq fii Principe I. Nudi Dumnogeni. Hic jacent in tumulo duo filii Liberali.*”

“This [is] the tomb of Catellus and Finn, sons of the I[llustrious] Prince Nudd, chief of the Dumnonians. Here lie in the sepulchre the two sons of Liberalis.”

From the main fact being repeated in the second sentence, it is to be inferred that the first has never been much more legible than it is now.

Except the suggestion that the I, with a rude stop after it, is a contraction, the only part of the reading I am answerable for is the name of the second brother.

It was obvious the word must be a personal name, and, trying to complete the reading by the help of a photograph, I made it out to be *Finn*, allowing for a breakage, a blot of the chisel, between the two first letters.

Phinn or Finn is a common name enough, but one did not expect it on Welsh ground; and then it dawned upon me that Finn is the Gaelic form of the Welsh Gwynn, both meaning white or fair; and Gwynn ap Nudd is so very well-known a person, through the Welsh tales, that even Mr Skene at one time regarded him as mythical. Two sons of Nudd Hael's are among the Welsh saints, probably these two brothers, as killed fighting the heathen. The names are quite different, but are probably *sobriquets*. Dingad, meaning, I suppose, battle-fort, is married to a daughter of Llew Loth; and Gwynn, in perhaps the most interesting poem in the Four Ancient Books of Wales, calls himself the lover of the daughter of Lud. The name given her there, *Crerdyllid*, seems a corruption of *Trefrian*, lady of the land; her christian name seems to have been Tonwy, "wave-born." A similar error may be seen in Crailing for Traverlinn.

The place where Sir Walter met the brown-clad man, who twice over vanished suddenly when approached, must apparently have been what a native of the country would have described as the turn of the Yair road below the shepherd's cottage at the Craig. It is about a mile from Ashiesteel, being a little further than the bridge over the Tweed, from which it is separated by the haugh. It has all the features; two straight stretches of highroad separated by a sort of elbow, no heather, and no underwood, but scattered birch trees. The only other highroad that could be meant would be that from Elibank, and that mainly runs through pasture-land, which Sir Walter at least would not have called forest. The Craig cottage is now superseded by the lodge at the gate, which now marks the road through Yair as private.

*The following are the particulars from Gillies' Recollections of Sir Walter Scott.* Reprinted in 1837 from *Fraser's Magazine*; Chapter V., 1811.

His dinner hour being so early as half-past four, there was ample time for conversation, and for a few minutes, I remember, it turned on ghosts and apparitions.

"The most awkward circumstance about *well-authenticated* hob-goblins," said he, "is that they, for the most part, come and disappear without any intelligible object or purpose except to frighten people, which, with all due deference, seems rather foolish.

"Very many persons have either seen a ghost or something like one, and I am myself among the number; but my story is not a jot better than others I have heard, which, for the most part, were very inept. The *good* stories are sadly devoid of evidence; the *stupid* ones only are authentic.

"There is a particular turning of the highroad through the forest near Ashestiel, at a place which affords no possible means of concealment; the grass is smooth and always eaten bare by the sheep; there is no heather, or underwood, nor cavern in which any mortal being could conceal himself. Towards this very spot I was advancing one evening on horseback—please to observe it was *before* dinner, and not long after sunset, so that I ran no risk either of *seeing double* or wanting sufficient light for my observations.

"Before me, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, there stood a human figure, sharply enough defined by the twilight. I advanced; it stalked about with a long staff in its hand, held like a wand of office, but only went to and fro, keeping at the same corner till, as I came within a few yards, my friend all in an instant vanished.

"I was so struck with his eccentric conduct that, although Mrs Scott was then in delicate health, and I was anxious to get home to a late dinner, I could not help stopping to examine the ground all about, but in vain; he had either dissolved into air or sank into the earth, where I well knew there was no coal-pit to receive him. Had he lain down on the green sward, the colour of his drapery, which was dusky brown, would have betrayed him at once, so that there was no practicable solution of the mystery.

"I rode on, and had not advanced above fifty yards when, on looking back, my friend was there again, and even more clearly visible than before. 'Now,' said I to myself, 'I most certainly have you!' so wheeled about and spurred Finella; but the result was as before, he vanished instantaneously. I must candidly confess I had now got enough of the phantasmagoria; and whether it were from a love of home, or a participation in my dislike of this very stupid ghost, no matter, Finella did her best to run away, and would by no means agree to any further process of investigation,

"I will not deny that I felt somewhat uncomfortable, and half inclined to think this apparition was a warning of evil to come, or indication, however obscure, of misfortune that had already occurred. So strong was this impression that I almost feared to ask for Mrs Scott when I arrived at Ashiestiel; but, as Dr Johnson said on a similar occasion, 'nothing ever came of it.' My family were all as usual; but I did not soon forget the circumstances, because neither the state of the atmosphere nor outline of the scenery allowed of explanation, by reference, to any of those natural phenomena producing apparitions, which, however remarkable, are familiar not only to James Hogg as a poet, but to almost every shepherd in a mountainous district."

As to Sir Walter's anxiety about his wife, it may be added that the ailments which harrassed Lady Scott all the latter part of her life began about this time. With the resources, or rather the adjuncts, which medicine has acquired since, she might probably have been restored to health; but, as it was, there seems to have been nothing to be done but the administration of drugs, which, though perhaps necessary, destroyed her nerves, and no doubt injured her health generally.

With reference to what is said above of Sir Walter's not knowing the scenery of East Lothian and Berwickshire, it seems almost incredible; but it is certain that when he wrote "*Marmion*," at the age of thirty-six, he had never seen Tantallon Castle, about twenty-five miles from Edinburgh. Mr Guthrie Wright, who suggested and described Tantallon to him, said that though he introduced it into the poem, he had no reason to suppose that he had gone to see it for himself.

In the same way Lockhart's expression, that Ashiesteel was inferior in dignity of association to Lasswade, may be taken, I think, as evidence that Sir Walter never knew, or never realised, that Caddonlee, in sight from his dressing-room window at Ashiesteel, had preceded the Boroughmuir of Edinburgh as the gathering-place of the Scotch army. *Marmion* was conducted to Edinburgh by an impossible route, partly, it is probable, to show the muster before Flodden in the latter locality, within some miles of Lasswade. Alexander II. is the "Scottish monarch" who was buried in Melrose Abbey, whether the marble tombstone marks his resting-place or not. He died in the Western Isles; and

as Dunfermline was the royal burying-place, both before and after his time, it is possible that the splendid muster at *Caldenlee*, for an invasion of England—even allowing for exaggeration, and the fact that nothing particular was accomplished—may account for his partiality to the neighbourhood.

In spite of Sir Walter's generally very correct views as to early Scotch history, there was much less known, or in print, about it in his time than now. His leaving *Lasswade* and coming to *Ashiesteel* was by no means voluntary, but for the greater convenience of county business; and the only place in the immediate neighbourhood, which seems to have touched his imagination, was *Elibank Tower*, as the scene of the marriage of his ancestress, *Muckle-mouthed Meg*.

The assassination of the Knight of *Liddesdale*, in the valley of the *Peel burn*, at a spot little more than a mile from *Ashiesteel*, was an event of historical importance. Besides all the causes of quarrel his own family are said to have had against him, *William Douglas* had made a private treaty with *Edward III.* to do everything in his power to forward the English claims on Scotland, short of bearing arms against it.

This seems strange in a warrior who had kept the English forces at bay for years; but he had been taken prisoner, and imprisonment was apparently what he could not endure. However secret the terms of his release may have been, it must have been seen that he was acting in the English interests.

Again, in spite of Sir Walter's strange hallucination about the *knocker* at *Traquair*, about seven miles from *Ashiesteel*, neither he nor *Lockhart* ever mentions it in print, even in connection with the *Bradwardine* bears. And yet it is not only one of the oldest inhabited houses in Scotland, but an undoubted *Queen Mary* locality. *Lockhart* appears never to have been at *Ashiesteel*, but to have seen it from the other side of the river. He must have been at the *Lasswade* house, from the particular he mentions of the view from the garden. It is of the distant *Peeblesshire* hills. It is a very pretty place still.

It ought not to be omitted that the *Ettrick* shepherd was actually herd at *Elibank* at one time, and in that capacity



was occasionally about Ashiesteel. This situation is not mentioned in the *Life* by his daughter, but he is known to have been in many different ones, being too poetical to be by any means a treasure to his employers.

The time was probably before Sir Walter Scott was at Ashiesteel; that he had been there with him is shown by the letter quoted by Lockhart, in which he regrets his leaving it.

It should be mentioned, as tending to its identification, that the stone with the inscription to Silvanus is not really an altar, but an altar-tablet. There is no receptacle for the sacrifice on the top, and it is not square in section; in fact it is like the front half of a low square pillar, and there is no representation of the sacrificing implements on it, which is usual on an altar. It is of the red sandstone of the Melrose district.

In connection with Lockhart's odd freak as to Lady Forbes' name, it may be noticed that *Lady Scott's* name was Margaret, if the entries in Sir Walter's family bible, as given in the *Life*, are to be trusted; though, as is well known, she was always called by her second name, Charlotte.

It throws no further light on poor Janet Dalrymple's history; but it is a sufficiently interesting fact that the linen of her outfit, which she must have brought with her to Baldoon not long before her death, turned up not long ago, apparently intact and unused. One can quite imagine a strong feeling against using it.

I observe Sir Walter does mention Traquair in one of his letters, but the allusion rather emphasizes his want of any sentiment about it. It is in connection with a particular breed of ducks; and he speaks of it as a solitary old *chateau*, while it is far from being solitary as places go in Scotland. Lord Traquair and his family were probably absent when the Scotts first came to Ashiesteel, for they lived long on the continent; but they must apparently have been driven home by the spread of the war into Spain, where they were at one time.

On the 8th of May 1897 a picture was sold by Christie and Manson, in London, which was called a portrait of Sir Walter Scott as a boy, in the Highland dress—by Sir Henry Raeburn. It seems odd that more should not be

known about it, but it is quite possible it may be genuine. I do not know that the biography of Raeburn gives any exhaustive catalogue of his immensely numerous portraits. But Mr Scott was quite rich enough to have his son painted by Raeburn if he liked; and as their friend and client, old Stewart of Invernahyle—Lockhart says—gave the young Walter a claymore and Lochaber axe, which are now at Abbotsford, it is quite possible the youth may have managed a suit of tartan; he probably never attempted the kilt. He latterly wore the Highland dress, in the trows form, of Campbell tartan at the meetings of the Celtic Society. His connection with the Campbells was through the wife of his great-grandfather, Beardie. The picture sold for £115.

There are at least three other original portraits of Sir Walter, which are not mentioned by Lockhart. One a full-length, life-size standing—which, I think, none of his other portraits are—by James Hall, a younger brother of his friend, Captain Basil Hall, who latterly adopted painting as a profession.

I do not know that the date is exactly known, but it must have been quite in his latter years; he is leaning on his stick, and it gives an idea of feebleness and failing which makes it a very painful presentment.

The movement was at work which later produced the Pre-Raphaelites, and the idea was that things ought to be painted as they really are; which in fact they ought, if they are painted at all, which is generally quite a matter of choice. I believe this full-length was bought by Sir William Stirling Maxwell. There is a photograph, apparently taken from a statuette of Sir Walter standing, and I think it may have been modelled and somewhat modified from this picture.

Secondly, a good portrait of the robust type was painted about 1811, for Lady Abercorn, I think by Phillips. It is a head and shoulders, and has the head of a little black dog introduced. From the date, this must be his Ayrshire terrier Wallace, "his constant companion and prime favourite," as Mr Gillies says.

Thirdly, a clever slight sketch, representing him sitting with his daughter and another lady, was taken in Rome. It is by no means unpleasant, though it must have been

done only a few weeks before his final breakdown. Lockhart does say he believes there were portraits he had not seen.

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PLATE I. represents the house at Ashiesteel as seen from the west. The centre is the oldest part; the window on the ground floor, on the east side of the door, is the remaining window of the old dining-parlour, the two others having been closed by the building of the east wing. The window on the ground floor, in the west wing, is that of the old drawing-room—now a bedroom—and the room over that was Lady Scott's bedroom. The hill on the other side of the river, along which the railway passes, is part of Caddon Law; the higher one in the distance is Meikle, near Galashiels, the name of which, when Mr Lowther was in Scotland in 1629, was, or had been, the gathering-cry of the district. The low hill of Caddonlee is seen between, with some small remains of a large fort, ploughed up during the old war.

*From a photograph by Mr MacLagan, Galashiels.*

PLATE II. shows the chair which was a present from Sir Walter Scott to Miss Jane Russell, with the wheels, which were put on for the purpose of having it photographed. They were so frail that the whole had to be held steady by Mr Robert Reid, gardener at Ashiesteel.

*Photograph by Mr MacLagan.*



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